

## The Sydney Conservatorium of Music

### ***Learning and Teaching Strategic and Operational Plan: 2011-15***

This plan should be read in conjunction with the SCM Strategic Directions document 2010-1015. It expands on the Learning and Teaching Strategic directions statement through the provision of an operational approach.

This plan has been formulated through an evaluation of the previous SCM Strategic Learning and Teaching Plan 2007-2010. The Learning and Teaching Committee of the SCM have contributed to the evaluation through an examination of the goals/strategies against known outcomes. The group has contributed during the evaluation period (April-June 2010) through open discussion using a weblog, during regular L&T meetings, during a special meeting to focus on the plan, and through critique during this document's development. The Draft Plan was then disseminated to the SCM Executive Group including Chairs for their critique and instruction.

#### **Learning & Teaching : A vision**

The quality of our graduates depends on the quality of their learning environment, performance and educational opportunities, and their motivation to excel. Learning and teaching quality is the outcome of carefully planned and executed scholarly activity that provides a context in which individual aspiration can flourish. It is our view that all activities that involve music students contribute to their final professional capacities and therefore that we must support their development through scholarly, innovative and exciting teaching. At the core of our program we recognise the strengths that come with diversity. This diversity represents different musical orientations (such as composition, performance or education), and differences in background (musical, educational and cultural). Both students and teachers at the Con bring with them strong contributions based on these differences that enrich the overall musical learning environment. Above all, creative work requires recognition of these personal and scholarly attributes, in order to flourish.

Our previous Teaching and Learning Plan (2007-2010) identified 5 strategic goals:

1. Continue to promote the pursuit of artistic and academic excellence within a dynamic and socially responsive educational environment;
2. Continue to build a learning and teaching environment responsive to the evolving needs and diverse professional pathways of musicians in the 21st century;

3. Maintain and extend the Conservatorium's commitment to providing an outstanding student experience;
4. Promote and support research-enhanced and inquiry-led teaching and learning as an integral aspect of faculty culture and;
5. Support and celebrate teaching excellence and the fundamental importance of teaching to faculty identity.

These goals and their associated strategic and operational plans provided a clear pathway to the articulation of our current approaches. Now, we support and extend these goals through a focus on a subtle change of philosophy, accompanied by some specific intentions for growth. Firstly, our new plan explicitly acknowledges that the student experience is our reason for existing. Hence, our strategies are now encapsulated in a Learning and Teaching Plan. Finally, we identified some key action areas where we chose specific attainable objectives: the Quality of Student Learning, Assessment, Teaching and Curriculum.

### **Objective: Student Learning Quality**

Action 1. To ensure that there is a culture of responsiveness to students.

*Establish open learning fora on musical topics*

*Ensure that staff consultation times are published*

*Continue student liaison groups*

*Support student development through 'listening' opportunities such as student performance practice and concert attendance*

Action 2. To foster creativity in formal and informal settings.

*Provide multiple performance opportunities*

*Include performances that meet community needs for social inclusion*

*Foster work experience projects in community organisations*

*Creativity evident in all assessment criteria*

Action 3. To use technology appropriately and consistently so as to support multi-modal learning.

*Increase the number of units that use e-learning and blended learning options.*

*Trial the development of e-portfolios*

*Develop some Open Academy or Open Learning courses*

*Ensure students are learning about technology enhanced performance and learning practices.*

*Support staff to develop appropriate e-learning sites.*

Action 4. To promote a seamless experience where written advice (such as the handbook) and practice cohere.

*Regularly review student communication strategies.*

*Regular review of handbook.*

*Website information to be updated regularly.*

*Ensure that language support is provided to international students.*

*Ensure that 1<sup>st</sup> year orientation and 1<sup>st</sup> year experiences target student perceptions, learning and progression.*

Action 5. To encourage international experiences through student mobility, tours and technology.

*Streamline Scholarship opportunities for travel.*

*Stream live performances.*

*Increase awareness of internationalisation using the HD Con website.*

Action 6. To encourage students to engage with communities through participation and leadership in music making.

*Support student engagement through structured opportunities.*

*Acknowledge publically student involvement in community music making.*

*Develop a music careers website.*

Action 7. To develop a scholarly culture leading students to enrol in honours and research work.

*Provide opportunities for students to engage with Research Enriched Learning and Teaching throughout the curriculum.*

*Publicise staff performance / research to the student body as examples of professional practice.*

*Ensure the quality of student entrance standards through auditions and interviews.*

*Provide appropriate reward to high potential and high achieving students through scholarships and prizes.*

Action 8. To improve the technology and infrastructure in learning spaces.

*Align technology plan with learning and teaching.*

*Ensure main campus tech development includes Greenway campus.*

*Extend use of video or audio recording in all learning and teaching situations.*

### **Objective: Assessment Quality**

Action 1. Develop transparent, valid and fair assessment protocols and criteria.

*Examine existing protocols and adapt*

*Provide assessment protocols for Orchestral Studies*

*Provide workshops for staff to discuss assessment issues.*

Action 2. Moderate performance outcomes between performance units.

*Undertake a statistical analysis of grades in performance units each semester.*

*Use 'cross-over' panels on all final recitals.*

*Record all recital performances.*

Action 3. Develop a process of providing formative assessment for performance students.

Action 4. Ensure that students are not over-assessed.

Action 5. Align Con assessment policy and practice with USYD policies.

*Use the 2010 USYD assessment working group to trial assessment plans.*

*Ensure that SCM assessment activities comply with USYD practice [gather material from UOS].*

Action 6. Include assessment processes in units of study (UoS).

*Ensure that all UoS have assessment processes and criteria for each task.*

*Ensure that all UoS are made available to students on USYD e-learning.*

Action 7. Ensure comparability of honours assessment between units and with main campus.

*Complete a review of Hons programs by end 2011. AQF compliant.*

### **Objective: Teaching Quality**

Action 1. Use scholarly approaches to develop the capacity of teachers.

*Encourage inquiry based teaching.*

*Encourage systematic exploration of teaching situations.*

*Encourage staff to take international opportunities to build expertise.*

*Encourage attendance at ITL seminars and courses*

Action 2. Develop a process to communicate teaching best practice.

*Use L&T committee members to disseminate best practice ideas.*

*Invite guests to promote teaching initiatives.*

*Encourage participation in SCM development workshops.*

Action 3. Focus on the quality of student experience through the regular evaluation of teaching.

*Establish internal evaluation systems.*

*Establish feedback protocols to student groups.*

*Continue cyclic evaluation through USE.*

*Provide reports and actions to LTC about CEQ and SCEQ.*

Action 4. Alignment of SCM graduate attributes with USYD systems.

*Develop staged formative and summative activities and assessments.*

Action 5. Systematize professional development through workshops and other opportunities.

*Continue World of Academic Work seminar series.*

*Publicise ITL sessions and L&T conference opportunities.*

Action 6. Foster peer learning about teaching through inter-unit reflective practice.

*Trial Peer learning and development activity in 2011.*

*Establish Peer learning about teaching as a core value.*

Action 7. Develop teaching quality through targeted applications to the ALTC – awards and grants.

*Support the development of at least two ALTC applications each year.*

*Target staff to apply for USYD and then ALTC awards.*

### **Objective: Curriculum Quality**

Action 1. Regular review of Unit of Study Outlines.

*Review UoS outlines each semester for information compliance.*

*Ensure UoS outlines comply with AQF level descriptors.*

Action 2. Ensure that Units of Study are relevant to professional work.

*Undertake cyclic review of units for RELT and professional orientations.*

*Ensure that units and courses are artistically and academically excellent.*

*Respond rapidly within the curriculum to social and environmental changes.*

Action 3. Ensure that E-Learning is supported in all units.

*use a phased introduction (information dissemination, basic teaching/learning, innovations - including migration to blackboard).*

Action 4. Examine student workload in all units of study and clarify total student load.

*Develop staff and student understanding of credit load: [uni norm is 1 credit point= 2 hours student work/week.]*

Action 5. Examine current Units of Study and explore potential for new Units of Study and removal of others.

Action 6. Establish benchmarking with other national and international institutions.

*Maintain associate status with AEC.*

*Benchmark entry and exit standards with Go8 and international partners.*

*Undertake a NASM review.*